

Overweight

The World Health Organization now considers obesity to be a global epidemic and an increasingly important public health problem as more nations become “Westernized.” “Overweight” or “obese” is defined using the measure of body mass index (BMI), which is the ratio of weight in kilograms to height in meters, squared. “Overweight” in adults over 18 years old is defined as having a Body Mass Index (BMI) between 25.0 and 29.9. “Obesity” is defined as having a BMI of 30 or greater. Overweight and obesity develop when an individual consumes more energy than expected. Overweight and Obesity increases cardiovascular morbidity and mortality primarily through its effect on blood lipid levels, higher blood pressure, and higher blood sugar levels. These effects are also considered risk factors for osteoarthritis and breast, esophageal, gastric, endometrial, renal, and colorectal cancers.

The number of overweight adults (BMI between 25-29.9) in the United States has risen dramatically over the past few years. It is now estimated that 54% of American adults are overweight, an increase of 8% in 15 years. Very small reductions in weight (5%-10%) of an overweight or obese individual can have a large beneficial impact on health status and may reduce individual health care costs, which in turn will reduce the overall health care cost. In 1995, the portion of national health care cost attributable to obesity was \$99.2 billion. This represents approximately 10% of the total cost for national health care.

Height and weight reported by the BRFSS respondents were used to calculate the BMI.

Current Overweight status

About two-fifths (39.5%, 95% CI, 36.9% - 42.1%) of all Lancaster County adults were overweight according to the self-reported 2000 BRFSS survey questions on height and weight.

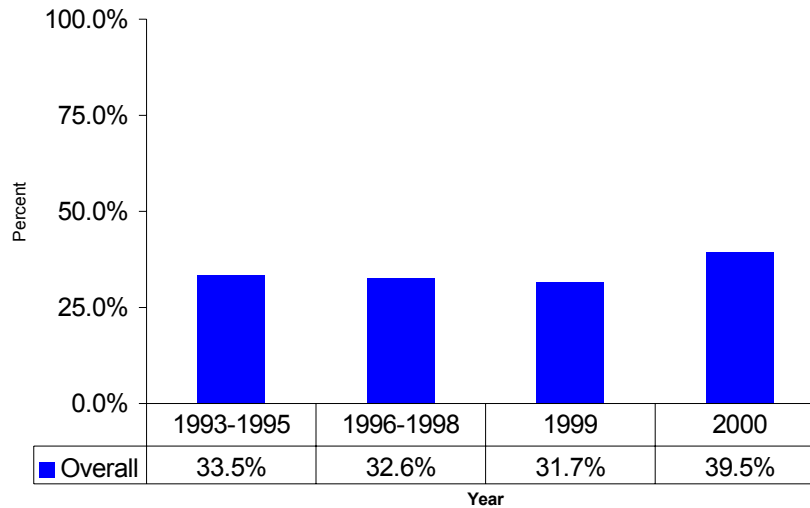
Prevalence and Trend

The proportion of overweight adults in Lancaster County showed a very little variation between 1993 to 1999. It ranged from 33.5 percent in 1993-1995 to 32.6 percent in 1996-1998 and 31.7 percent in 1999 (Fig.79).

Just over half (50.8%) of the adult males in Lancaster County were overweight, whereas a little over one-fourth (27.4%) of female adults were overweight. Across all the years, men were about two times more likely to be overweight than women (Fig.80).

As the age of an adult increases, the chance that that person is overweight also increases. In 2000, the overweight rates ranged from a low of 31.6 percent for adults aged 18-24 to a high of 48.7 percent for adults aged 65-74. It then went down to 32.3 percent for adults aged 75 or older. Other than 1999, when the percent increased for those person aged 75 or more, the same pattern of age and overweight was noted in the previous years (Fig.81).

Fig.79: Trend in Overweight Based on Body Mass Index



In 1999, 14.5 percent of adults with less than \$10,000 income were overweight compared to 39.9 percent of adults with \$50,000 income. This indicates a significant net difference of 25.4 percent, correlating to an increase in the overweight population in relation to an increase in income. This difference was 18.4 percent and 14.8 percent in 1993-1995 and 1996-1998, respectively.

Fig.80: Overweight Male and Female Based on BMI

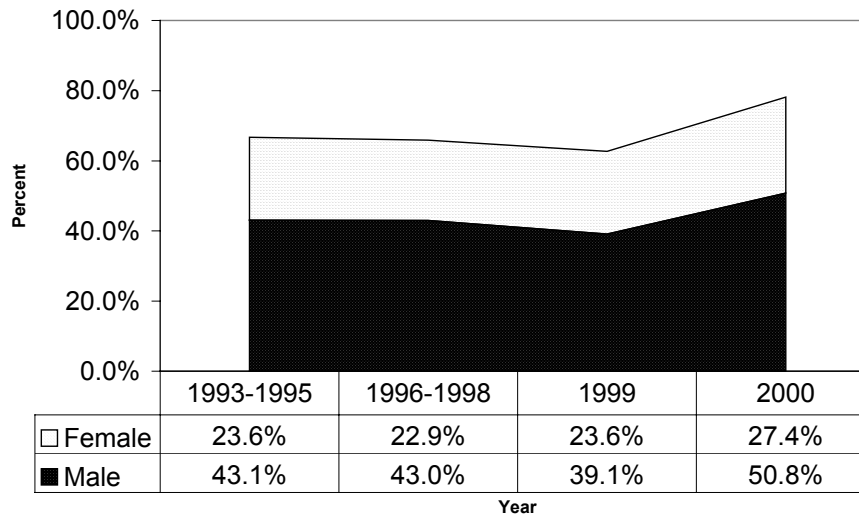
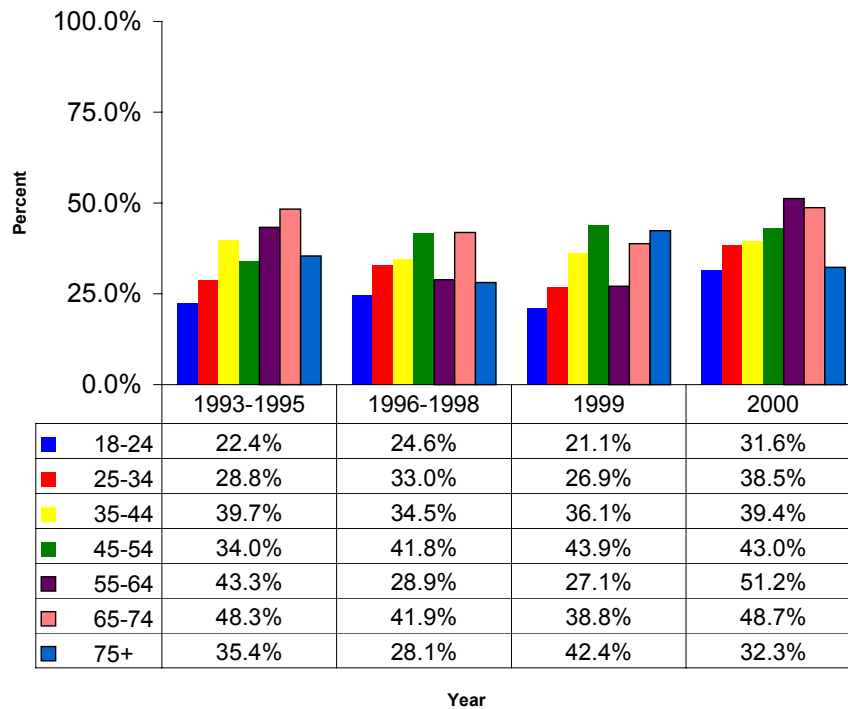
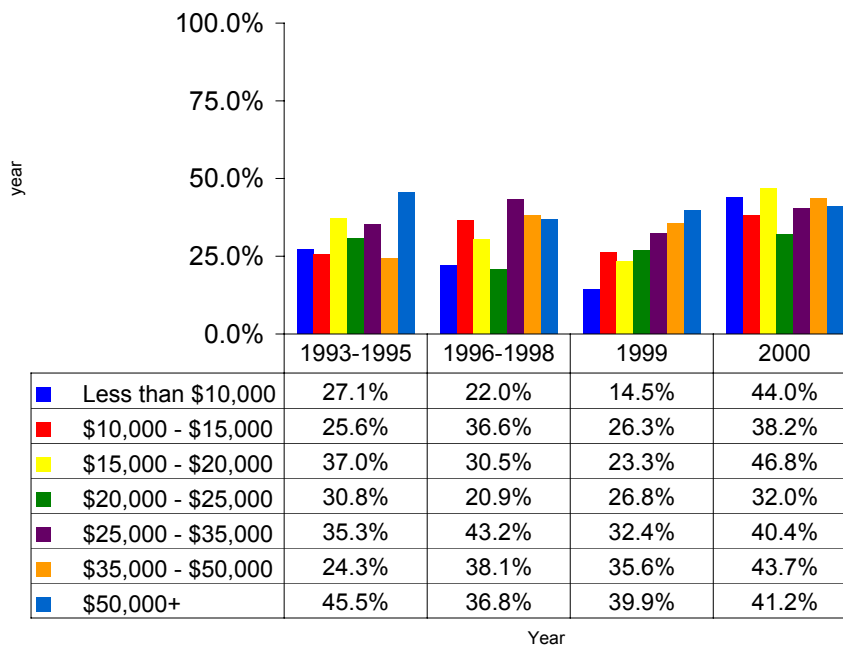


Fig.81: Overweight by Age Group



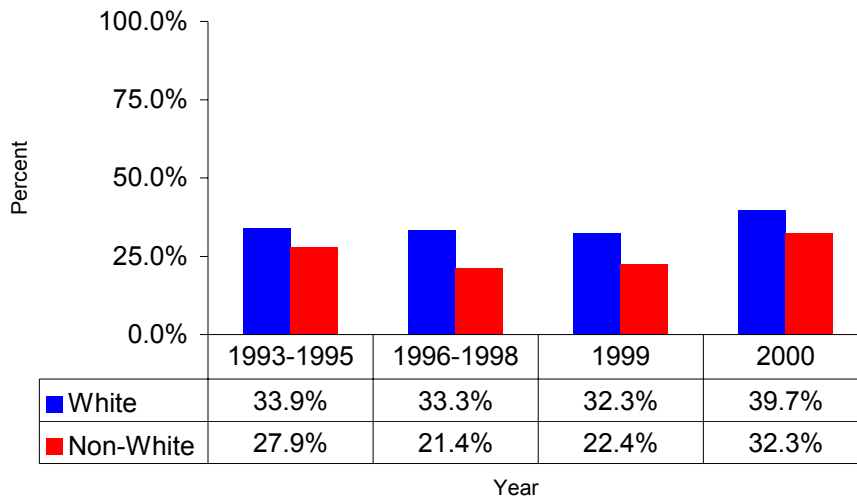
A higher prevalence of overweight was observed among whites (39.7%) over non-whites (32.3%, Fig.82b). College graduates had a higher prevalence of overweight than adults with “some high school education or less”. Nearly 40 Percent (39.9%) college graduates compared to 37.2 percent of adults with “some high school or less” were categorized as overweight according to the 2000 survey.

Fig.82a: Overweight by Income



Difference between these two groups were 23.3 percent versus 35.7 percent in 1993-1995, 28.1 percent versus 36.1 percent in 1996-1998, and 32.3 versus 39.3 percent in 1999 (Table 22).

Fig.82b: Overweight by Race



<i>Table 22: Overweight Based on BMI</i>				
Year	1993-1995	1996-1998	1999	2000
Highest Grade Completed				
Some HS or Less	23.3%	28.1%	32.3%	37.2%
HS Grade or GED	34.7%	34.8%	33.4%	40.6%
Some College	33%	28.4%	22.7%	38.2%
College Grade	35.7%	36.1%	39.3%	39.9%
Race				
White	33.9%	33.3%	32.3%	39.7%
Non-White	27.9%	21.4%	22.4%	32.3%